



INL employees (and their families) volunteered a collective 58 hours for the Salvation Army's Christmas bell ringing program. This is just one of many ways INL and its employees give back to Idaho communities.

Laboratory gives back to eastern Idaho community

By Lori Priest, *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

Idaho National Laboratory employees have a long history of charitable giving, and this year is no exception. From United Way donations to volunteer activities, employees' contributions in 2012 are benefiting their neighbors in the local community and throughout the state.

"We want to be a good corporate citizen and make a positive difference wherever we can," said Lori Priest, INL's community relations coordinator. "We will continue to do our part to support education programs, find avenues to help the less fortunate and support the economic development of the state."

During the holiday season, INL contractor Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) supports the annual sitewide Christmas for Families program. This year, employees "adopted" 60 families to provide gifts for 210 children from Arco, Mackay, Howe, Roberts, Pocatello, Rigby, Ririe, Menan, Idaho Falls, Blackfoot and Shelley. BEA donated \$4,250 toward food boxes for each family. Lab employees also bought gifts for 200 children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

And each year, the Team INL employee volunteer program provides support for the Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing program, which raises money to help provide food and shelter to the less fortunate in our community. This year, 52 INL volunteers filled 29 two-hour shifts.

INL recently announced that employees contributed more than \$321,000 to this year's United Way drive. BEA contributed \$55,000 in corporate funds, making the total INL contribution \$376,647. Since BEA took over operation of INL in 2005, employee contributions to the United Way have exceeded \$2.4 million and BEA has contributed an additional \$420,000 in corporate donations.



Current and former INL employees volunteered at the Idaho Falls Senior Citizens' Community Center holiday luncheon.

Team INL

BEA also supports the community through its [Team INL employee volunteer program](#), which provides a little bit of funding to help employees make a difference in their communities. The funding is often used to purchase building materials, paint, essential items and clothing. Since 2005, BEA employees and volunteer groups have completed more than 260 Team INL projects, such as providing Christmas gifts each year for the teenagers living at The Haven transitional housing shelter, for several seniors through the Santa for Seniors program and to developmentally disadvantaged individuals living in local group homes.



INL employees volunteer for a Team INL project to provide exterior maintenance at a child advocacy center in Pocatello.

This year's Team INL employee volunteers also contributed to the following efforts:

- * built another climbing wall on the north side of the existing Camp Magical Moments rappel tower
- * held a school supply donation drive to help area less-fortunate K-12 students
- * raised funds for the Idaho Foodbank's Weekend Backpack program
- * helped with Dream Night at the Tautphaus Park Zoo (an event for chronically ill and disabled children and their immediate families)
- * provided assistance to the Idaho Falls Friendship Garden project
- * held a teddy bear drive for the residents at the Good Samaritan— Idaho Falls Village and
- * served as elves to the area seniors at the Idaho Falls Senior Citizens Center Christmas luncheon.

Participants in INL's License to Lead program took part in three community service projects that involved: 1) providing general cleanup, painting and repair at two CLUB Inc. houses; 2) providing cleanup, major interior and exterior painting, and carpentry work at The Haven Shelter; and 3)

gathering 6,000 nonperishable food items and \$3,600 in donations for the Idaho Falls Community Food Bank. The three projects involved 51 people working more than 400 hours. In addition, License to Lead participants donated more than \$1,000 in cash, supplies and materials to facilitate the success of the projects.

Education Programs

INL's [education program office](#) invested \$352,574 in K-20 education initiatives to help more than 19,000 students throughout Idaho for Fiscal Year 2012. In addition, \$20,000 worth of scholarships was given to Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC), Idaho State University's Energy Systems Technology and Education Center ([ESTEC](#)), the Mayor's Scholarship Fund and dual credit opportunities for high school students. INL employees participated as both players and support volunteers in the EITC Foundation's [Great Race for Education](#) fundraiser. This year, the event raised \$30,000 for the foundation's scholarship fund.

INL also sponsored several community-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education opportunities around the state, including career fairs, Water Awareness, [Idaho Aerospace Scholars](#), [EITC summer camps](#), robotics programs, the Boise State University Engineering Expo and several other events.

BEA provides corporate funding for the Governor's Industry Award for Notable Teaching in STEM Award ([GIANTS](#)). Since 2010, through its partnership with Idaho's i-STEM initiative, BEA has provided professional STEM development to 1,150 teachers. BEA also provides high school and teacher summer internships and the INL Scholastic Tournament. Approximately 500 students from 48 schools participated in this year's INL Scholastic Tournament, a quiz-bowl type competition that tests students' math and science knowledge.



INL employees bought Christmas gifts for more than 200 children as part of the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.



Team INL employee volunteers built this rappelling wall at a camp for children with cancer.

Technical Assistance Program

Each year, the [INL technical assistance program](#) provides technical expertise to state and local governments, and regional small businesses. The requesting organization can receive, at no cost, up to 40 hours of laboratory employee time to address technical needs that cannot readily be met by commercially available resources in the region.

INL also donates technical expertise to community organizations. Since 2005, the lab has provided 7,900 hours' worth of technical assistance to communities supporting a total of 200 projects. Throughout 2012, INL provided support for 25 technical assistance projects totaling more than 1,000 hours.

For example, in 2012, the city of Marsing, Idaho, received technical assistance to understand the feasibility of producing usable methane from water wells. Chris Orme, with INL's Interfacial Chemistry Department, assisted with field-level knowledge and aided John Larsen, Marsing city superintendent, in the effort. The project yielded a very clean natural gas with approximately 90 percent methane saturated with water. By using selected membranes, water vapor can be extracted from the natural gas stream to prepare the methane for use.

The City of Stanley Geothermal Team requested assistance from INL researchers to develop a technical assessment of the geothermal energy potential in the Stanley Basin and the feasibility of developing a city resource for agricultural science or tourism.

Philanthropic Programs

Since the BEA contract began in February 2005, BEA has provided more than \$7 million in [corporate funding](#) to numerous educational, philanthropic and technology-based economic development programs. BEA provides funding to Help Inc., The Soup Kitchen, Idaho Falls Community Food Bank, The Shepherd's Inn, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Southeast Idaho, Family Services Alliance, Bright Tomorrows, The Haven, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center, and numerous nonprofit agencies that feed, clothe or provide shelter and services to the less fortunate in surrounding communities. INL funds philanthropic projects that focus on community, health and human services, and culture. In total, more than \$1.4 million in corporate funding has been given throughout the past six years to support more than 100 agencies and programs.

"Less fortunate doesn't necessarily mean unemployed. Many people are working but are having a difficult time making ends meet in this tough economy. Quite often they have to decide between making their house or rent payments, buying medicine, putting food on the table or keeping their houses warm," said Priest. "Fortunately, there are many nonprofit service agencies, Team INL employee volunteers, and a huge network of businesses and community members who all pull together to meet the needs throughout the year. It's a great community of caring people."

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[Feature Archive](#)



INL employees and INL contractor BEA donated more than \$376,000 to this year's United Way drive.